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UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : SAC (89-69) DATE: 3/15/67

FROM : SA EDWARD J. CARNEY, JR.

SUBJECT: ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT
JOHN FITZGERALD KENNEDY,
DALLAS, TEXAS, 11/22/63
MISC - INFO CONCERNING

Attached is a chronological running log of news reports on 3/15/67 concerning the preliminary hearing re CLAY L. SHAW.

EJC:sam
(3)

89-69-1767
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SERIALIZED..... FILED.....
FBI — NEW ORLEANS

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RUNNING LONG
NEWS REPORTS, 3/15/67
PRELIMINARY HEARING RE CLAY L. SHAW
NO FILE 89-69

9:30 a.m. WDSU reported that JAMES LISCOMB, 708 1/2 Bourbon, had been arrested last night on a charge of making threatening phone calls in connection with the GARRISON probe. It was reported that LISCOMB called the Orleans Parish Prison and said that he intended to make headlines in the GARRISON investigation. LISCOMB was reported as having a criminal record in Michigan. WDSU said other individuals, not identified, connected with the SHAW case, had been receiving threatening phone calls since yesterday's hearing.

9:45 a.m. WDSU radio - Bill Slater reporting - The first man on the witness stand this morning will likely be PERRY RUSSO, DA GARRISON's surprise witness ofyesterday. It was RUSSO, you'll remember who dramatically identified CLAY SHAW as the man he claimed he saw in 1963 with DAVID FERRIE & LEE HARVEY OSWALD. RUSSO told court yesterday he heard the three men plot the assassination of President KENNEDY.

The defense takes its turn today for the first time. Obviously, SHAW's attorneys are going to be trying to discredit RUSSO, GARRISON's key witness up to this point, and apparently the men GARRISON has previously referred to as his confidential informant. They subpoenaed registrars of both Tulane and Loyola Universities were RUSSO attended school, as well as personnel manager of Equitable Life Assurance Society where RUSSO is now employed in Baton Rouge. Defense is also expected to question RUSSO about a TV interview two weeks ago in which he denied ever knowing LEE HARVEY OSWALD.

Two of GARRISON's scheduled witnesses will be Parish Coroner NICHOLAS CHETTA, who is expected to testify about giving RUSSO a lie detector test and truth serum, and Dr. EDMOND FATTER, who presumably is an expert on hypnosis, and we understand RUSSO went under hypnosis to tell this same story to JIM GARRISON several weeks ago.

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We have an interview with man who is roommate of RUSSO at Baton Rouge. His name is STEVE DERBY, a 20 year old LSU student.

In interview DERBY said he saw FERRIE at one short instance, one short time and didn't remember being introduced to him, but knew he stuck in his mind because of the sort of fellow he was; he kinda scared DERBY and just stuck in his mind but other than that he didn't know any of these other people. DERBY said RUSSO never told him what he said to FERRIE. He told DERBY he got in a lot of heated discussions with FERRIE every time he met him. He usually got in a heated discussion with him because he was that sort of guy. FERRIE had his views on politics. DERBY said they usually talked about politics and different people and stuff and things like that but DERBY said he was not adept in the field and just kinda learned from him.

When asked about RUSSO's truthfulness DERBY said RUSSO was definitely telling the truth, that PERRY was not trying to make up any stories or trying to impress anybody or trying to do anything. He was just saying what he remembers and that he feels kinda bad being the only man that's getting SHAW in this predicament, and even though he is telling the truth he feels kinda of bad about it because it is on his shoulders and he is telling the truth and there is nothing else he can do. He just has to say the truth.

SLATTER sated it is interesting to note, and we should at this time, that JIM GARRISON's key witness up to this time was not mentioned and has not been mentioned in any part of the Warren Report or the Archives concerning material gathered by various investigative agencie RUSSO himself denied that he was ever talked to by any of these investigators or the Warren Commission.

SLATTER stated he understands security measures at the Criminal Court Building, particularly on the second floor, have been greatly tightened since yesterday. Apparently this is result of man who was arrested yesterday and we understand he had a gun. Before letting anyone into the courtroom the Sheriff's Deputies are frisnking every person. This was not done yesterday. Deputies and other officers present greatly increased over yesterday.

THREATS

Red Comet Edition

The 3/15/67 edition carried headline "Tighten Hearing Guard After Phone Threats. Ex-Con is Booked on Call Count". Article stated threatening phone calls received at the scene of the hearing. JAMES R. LISCOMB, age 30, 708 1/2 Bourbon, described as ex-convict from Michigan, was arrested and booked for making threatening phone calls. Police said LISCOMB telephoned Parish Prison officials and said he was brooding and intended to make national headlines in New Orleans.

Another article stated a small foreign made pistol was found Sunday, hidden behind the wheel of a truck at a service station where SHAW and his attorneys parked their car on 3/14/67. L. M. MAGRUDER, owner and operator of the station, reported a tall, slim, unidentified man was twice seen walking in the vicinity of the pistol's hiding place. MAGRUDER said the pistol, made in Germany, apparently was placed carefully behind the wheel of a truck which had not been used in some time.

Criminal Sheriff LOUIS HYDE, JR., said there were other phone calls to various other people and extra precautions were taken in anticipation of trouble.

11:23 a.m.

TERRY FLETTRICH, employee of WDSU-TV, was interviewed on the court house steps at which time she stated she had just come out of the CLAY SHAW hearing. She said the hearing started at approximately 10:30 a.m. and there was an introduction of records from Loyola and Tulane and that RUSSO was brought into the court toom and put on the stand at 11:50. Cross examination was begun by defense attorney IRVIN DYMOND and DYMOND's line of questioning was dealt with RUSSO's definition of God; seemed to be directed to discredit RUSSO as a witness. FLETTRICH said she left the court room at 11:00 a.m. at which time the Judges were in a huddle to decide on the objection raised by prosecution that defense line of questioning was improper.

11:52 a.m. WWL-TV reported hearing had just been recessed for lunch and would resume at 1:00 p.m. Reporters advised the highlights of the morning session were as follows:

After initial introduction of documents from Loyola & Tulane Univ., and Equitable Life Assurance, pertaining to RUSSO, cross examination was started by the defense. The defense questioning tested the credibility of RUSSO as a witness and also developed background of RUSSO. RUSSO admitted receiving psychiatric treatment from October, 1959, through late 1960, and having contacted by telephone, numerous doctors at LSU, Baton Rouge, which conversations he described dwelled on "social and personal things".

Reports also advised that subpoenaes were being issued to WVUE and WDSU-TV, presumably to obtain filmed interviews with RUSSO.

Reporter observed that RUSSO, throughout his morning testimony, was very cautious in his answers, asking for a repeat of questions on numerous occasions and that there were no apparent contradictions in his testimony as furnished by him on 3/14/67.

2:13 p.m. WWL-TV reporters appeared on the steps of the court house and advised there was a five minute recess in the afternoon session. They advised the most significant part of the testimony was regarding the cross examination of RUSSO re the alleged party that took place during the middle of Sept., at which party CLEM BERTRAND was present. RUSSO mentioned BERTRAND had on a white shirt and a maroon sports jacket. He went into great detail as to how RUSSO went to the apartment, in what car, who went with him. RUSSO advised SANDRA MOFFETT (ph) and LEFTY PETERSON were at the party but he could not remember whether they were in the car with him. RUSSO was asked by DYMOND to explain why he couldn't remember what time he went and how, but could remember how some people were dressed.

2:13 p.m. cont'd

RUSSO answered, because of the very nature of DAVE FERRIE; the apartment was in shambles, was always in chaos, and a man dressed like that was out of place.

He advised several Spanish speaking people were at this party, with green or khaki fatigues, and two young boys wearing dungarees.

He stated SANDRA MOFFETT was the only girl present; SANDRA stayed a couple of hours. She left before RUSSO. LEFTY PETERSON left before he did. RUSSO did not have a ride, so he stayed. RUSSO presumed FERRIE would give him a ride.

DYMOND asked him if he knew anyone by the name of LOUIS LANE (ph), a man in show business. RUSSO said no.

DYMOND asked if he knew JOE KENNY (ph), a musician. RUSSO said the name rang a bell but did not know where. DYMOND said he was known as the "Man of Many Horns". RUSSO said he knew one man that played two trumpets at one time but he was not at this party.

RUSSO was calm, answered direct. Testimony still very detailed.

DYMOND asked RUSSO if FERRIE had had a roommate. RUSSO said "yes", he had, and it was LEON OSWALD. This apparently was in September 1963.

RUSSO was asked how many times he saw LEON OSWALD and stated about three or four times beginning the middle of September to about the beginning of October or end of September. He said there was only one big party at FERRIE's house, the party where he overheard the alleged conspiracy, about the middle of the month.

2:13 p.m. cont'd

RUSSO stated SANDRA MOFFETT was not a local girl (in Sept. 1963), she was from Alabama, but he did not know where. She did not go to Tulane. He took her out two or three times. Could not remember her address in New Orleans, that it was around Canal and Broad, but did not know how many blocks from Canal and Broad.

RUSSO was not sure how he got to the party or who went with him.

WWL advised there were no contradictions on RUSSO's part.

2:30 p.m.

WDSU Radio reported RUSSO stated that a friend of his, AL LANDRY, knew FERRIE. According to RUSSO, LANDRY's mother tried to get RUSSO to break up the friendship between LANDRY and FERRIE.

FORD ROWAN, WDSU reporter, advised that the tape recording of interview with RUSSO on 2/24/67 was not played in the courtroom but that they read part of transcript which dealt with whether FERRIE had threatened RUSSO and RUSSO said he took it as a threat at the time it was made, but under strenuous cross examination said he did not consider it a threat today, at this time, because he knew FERRIE afterward and learned certain things about him and at this time did not consider it a threat. They then read transcript where last month, 2/24/67, RUSSO told JIM KEMP, repoter in Baton Rouge, that FERRIE had threatened his life.

3:15 p.m.

WWL-TV reported RUSSO was shown two photos, one of OSWALD being led down hall after assassination and the other of RUBY shooting OSWALD. He pointed out LEON OSWALD on left in photo. Could not be sure if OSWALD on right in other photo. At this point, DYMOND repeatedly tried to get him to say if he recognized OSWALD and he said "I'm not going out on a limb". He then rambled off in another direction. Talked about death of his mother,

baseball games in summertime, going to school, among other things. His recollection of who OSWALD was or wasn't, was not clear. DYMOND asked when he first saw OSWALD on TV after assassination and he said he couldn't recall, he said he had a lot on his mind, his mother's death, school, books, ball games.

BOB JONES, reporter, WWL-TV, said former Chief of Police of Dallas, Texas, JESS CURRIE, is in court room sitting in jury box next to two TASS reporters.

Also mentioned that 9-minute audio-tape interview between RUSSO and JIM KEMP to get into record what DYMOND thinks are contradicting statements made during interview and in court. In tape he was asked by KEMP if he knew LEE HARVEY OSWALD and he said no, he didn't know LEE HARVEY OSWALD. Claims he knew a LEON OSWALD.

Stated credibility of RUSSO's statement in court is somewhat shaky. His testimony is a little shaky; he is a little more unsure of himself; he is very cautious, very careful, almost overly cautious, and not saying anything that can possibly be construed the wrong way.

RUSSO has recollection of knowing OSWALD after taking a truth serum.

When asked why he wasn't sure about identification on picture, RUSSO said "Well, it was baseball time", at which time Judge called recess.

4:30

WWL reported that the last session was fairly interesting and the high point of it was when DYMOND, the defense attorney for CLAY SHAW, attempted to introduce all 26 volumes of the Warren Report. Judge BAGERT got red-faced and said "You must be kidding" and DYMOND said "NO, your honor, I'm not kidding." BAGERT replied again "You've got to be kidding". BAGERT then said, "OK, OK, we'll read it. Then he stopped, saying "NO, we're not going to read a thing. We can't put it in the records and DYMOND at that point turned to BAGERT, who was still red faced, and said "I thought this was a three-judge court, you're making all the decisions. BAGERT got a little more red faced, it quited down and went on to something else. CHARLIE WARD, representing the DA's office, objected strenuously and after a round of consultation between the three judges it was concluded that the 26 volumes would not be introduced. A 9 minutex tape was played in court in which RUSSO told about his acquaintance with FERRIE. He said he put LEE HARVEY OSWALD out of his mind after the assassination because he did not recognize him from the TV pictures. After the mid-afternoon recess the state issued another subpoena. The name of the person subpoenaed was not brought out in open court. The name will be furnished in a later newscast. RUSSO was brought back in and asked by the defense if he considered the assassination plot a joking threat. He said he did not know how to interpret FERRIE's remarks. He said on the 22nd February, he wrote DA JIM GARRISON about DAVID FERRIE. He said he had information about FERRIE. He said he mailed the letter on the 23rd. He said he called

the Baton Rouge detective agency about making a statement in Baton Rouge, where he was living at the time, rather than coming down here to the DA's office. Reporter observed that letter was written on 22nd and actual stormy, break in the store, broke on the 13th. We're (reporter still observing) talking about one week later when RUSSO comes forward and writes a letter to the DA and told the DA he would come down on the weekend and tell him everything he knew about it, his associations with FERRIE and CLAY BERTRAND. The DA said "Come down on the weekend" and he said no, I want to play baseball this weekend, I'll give my statement to the District Attorney's office in Baton Rouge. Apparently that is what he did do. He gave a statement and later came to New Orleans. It was odd that he didn't want to come that weekend because he wanted to play baseball. He was then asked by the defense why he had not given the information to GARRISON prior to this and he said he never pushed himself on anybody. RUSSO said he saw that GARRISON was investigating the President's death, reiterated he wrote the letter 2 days before he appeared on an interview on TV, then he testified that he didn't know whether any testimony would be valuable before the Warren Commission. The defense had asked why he did not bring his information forth to the Warren Commission. DYMOND was trying to discredit his apparent testimony thus far in the preliminary hearing by asking RUSSO "If you thought your information was valid, why did you wait until now?" RUSSO's only reply and he said iy over and over, was he felt what he knew was not very important until someone would have looked him up and he said he thought the FBI was competent enough to look into the

matter and if they had not contacted him it was not his business to contact the FBI and DYMOND came back with several questions such as "Did you hate KENNEDY enough not to cooperate and this was objected to by the DA's staff. He said he did not know any particular site they were plotting the assassination. He said they didn't mention Dallas or any site. He said the Warren Commission was supposed to be knowing what they were doing and he said his school activities were important at the time. He said "I had other things on my mind and I knew the FBI knew what they were doing." RUSSO said he didn't know whether the Warren Commission's conclusion that OSWALD acted alone was correct or not. He said OSWALD was not the same man the same man physically, face wise, when he knew him as when he saw him later on TV. That seems to be a very fuzzy portion as to when RUSSO decided in his own mind that the OSWALD who did, in fact, according to the Warren Commission, assassinate the President was the same man that he knew here. He only made up his mind after he looked at a series of photos and one particular photo; a composite was made where a 3 or 4 day growth beard was placed on the photo. Only at that time did RUSSO definitely say this is the guy I know as OSWALD. He said the OSWALD I knew had the same face, but he was dirty, had a facial growth and looked like a beatnik. It appears the defense for CLAY SHAW will attempt to discredit his evaluation of who OSWALD is because this photo he identified him by was touched up and not a true photo.

One particular point to make here regarding RUSSO's reference to KENNEDY. He said he admired KENNEDY in two areas in that KENNEDY did not measure up in other respects.

From Dallas we learned the widow of OSWALD, Mrs. MARINA PORTER, says she never heard of DAVID FERRIE or CLAY SHAW or CLEM BERTRAND. Mrs. PORTER also said in Dallas that New Orleans DA never has contacted her during his probe of the KENNEDY assassination.

5:00

WDSU-TV reported PERRY RUSSO on stand all day. Today it was the defense's turn to question RUSSO, GARRISON's chief witness. The Defense tried to tear down RUSSO's testimony regarding party he attended at FERRIE's apartment where OSWALD and SHAW were present, and overheard plot made. RUSSO was unable to recall certain times, certain dates. RUSSO said he did not go to the Warren Commission or to authorities until after FERRIE's death and after investigation had been brought out, because he just did not think it was true. RUSSO not sure LEON OSWALD he met at FERRIE's apartment identical with LEE HARVEY OSWALD. RUSSO identified LEON OSWALD and LEE HARVEY OSWALD through composit photograph at District Attorney's Office. Did not know until saw composit drawing by members District Attorney's Office that the man he knew as LEON OSWALD was LEE HARVEY OSWALD. LEON OSWALD referred to as roommate of FERRIE. DEFENSE attorneys tried to undermind RUSSO's testimony. RUSSO on stand all afternoon. RUSSO kept composure during questioning by DYMOND. Questioned whether RUSSO testimony true. RUSSO did not remember OSWALD until after taking truth drugs and underwent hyphotism. Had gotten into heated discussions with FERRIE because he was that sort of guy. FERRIE had strong views on politics and used to talk about this and people kind of learned from ; him. RUSSO told court truth, definitely not trying to make up anything; just wanted to tell what he remembers. While kind of bad being only man getting SHAW into this position, wants to tell. WDSU officials delivered tape of interview of RUSSO made several weeks ago in which he said never met OSLWAD. Yesterday said met LEON OSWALD at party in FERRIE's apartment. District Attorney's office called witness for tomorrow's hearing. JAMES LEWELLEN, Michoud employee, and former roommate of FERRIE. Judge BAGERT and other judges decided not to allow SHAW's attorneys to introduce Warren

Commission report as evidence.